

Fish Stocking & Harvest

C. Wade Bales
Fisheries Biologist



Roadmap

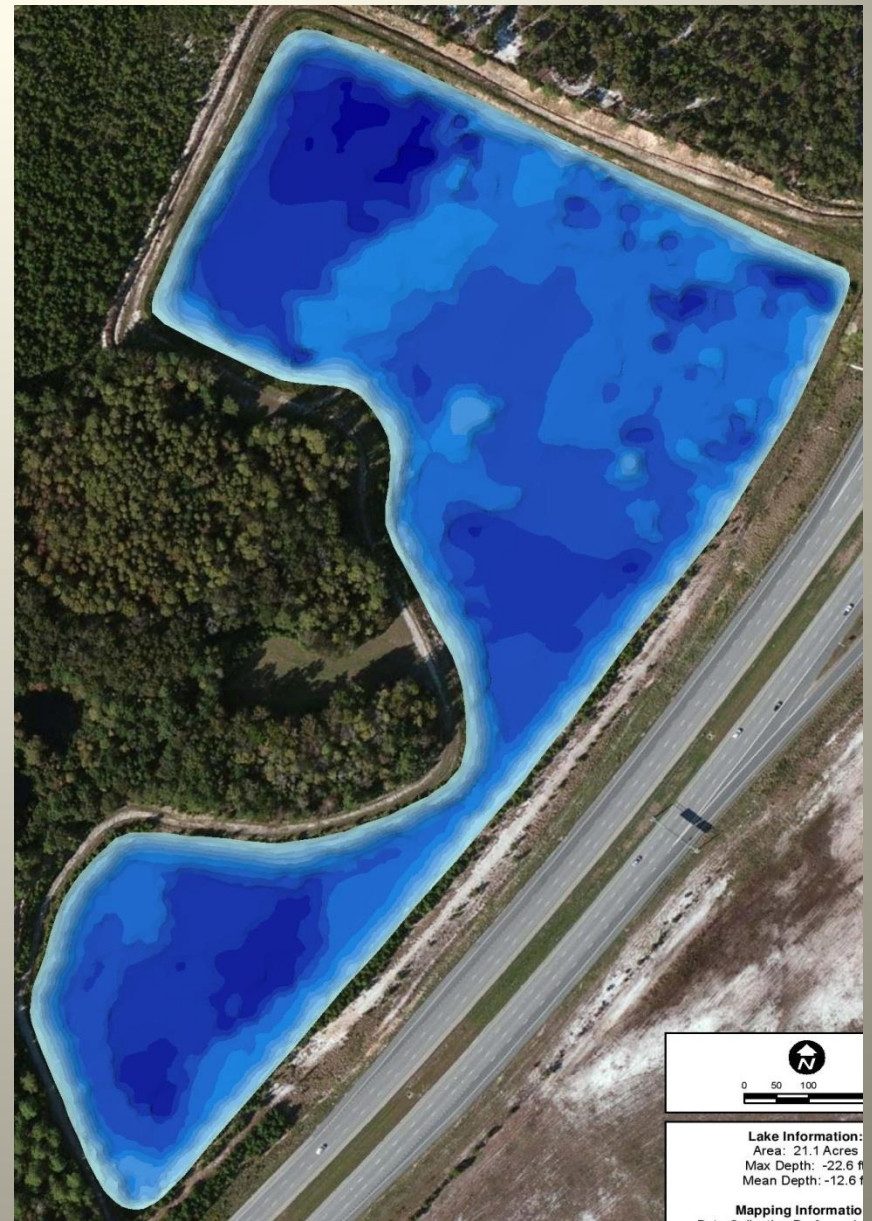
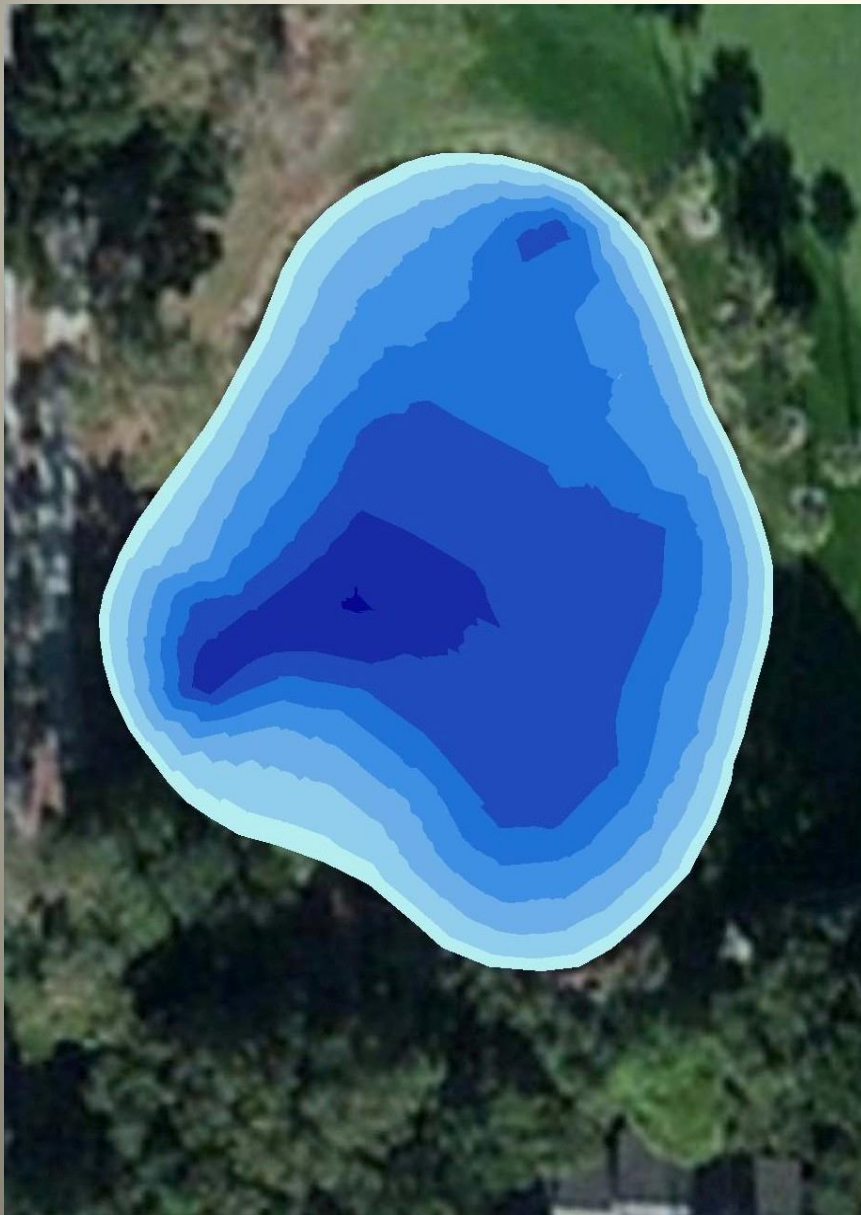
- Habitat Characteristics
- Fish Species & Stocking
- Fish Management
- Summary



Fish Habitat Needs

- Variety of depths to 8'+
- Abundant structure
- Good, stable water quality

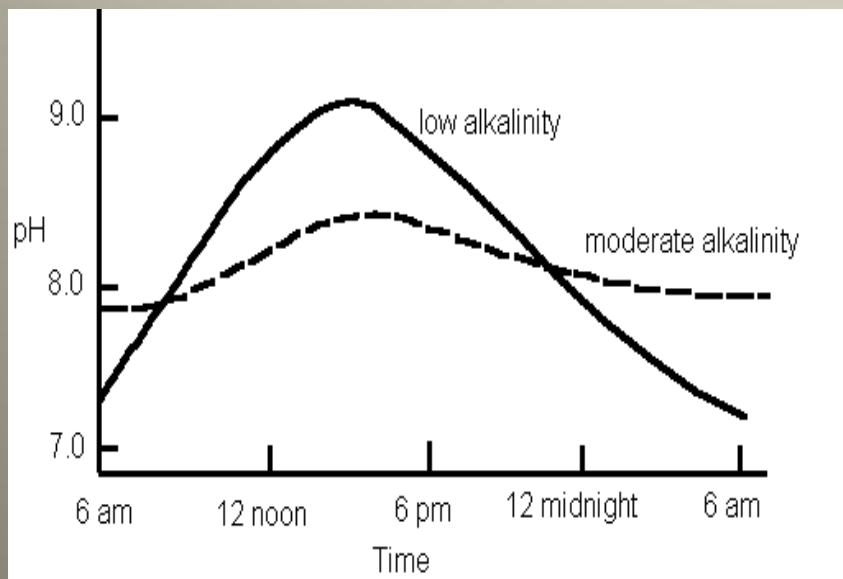




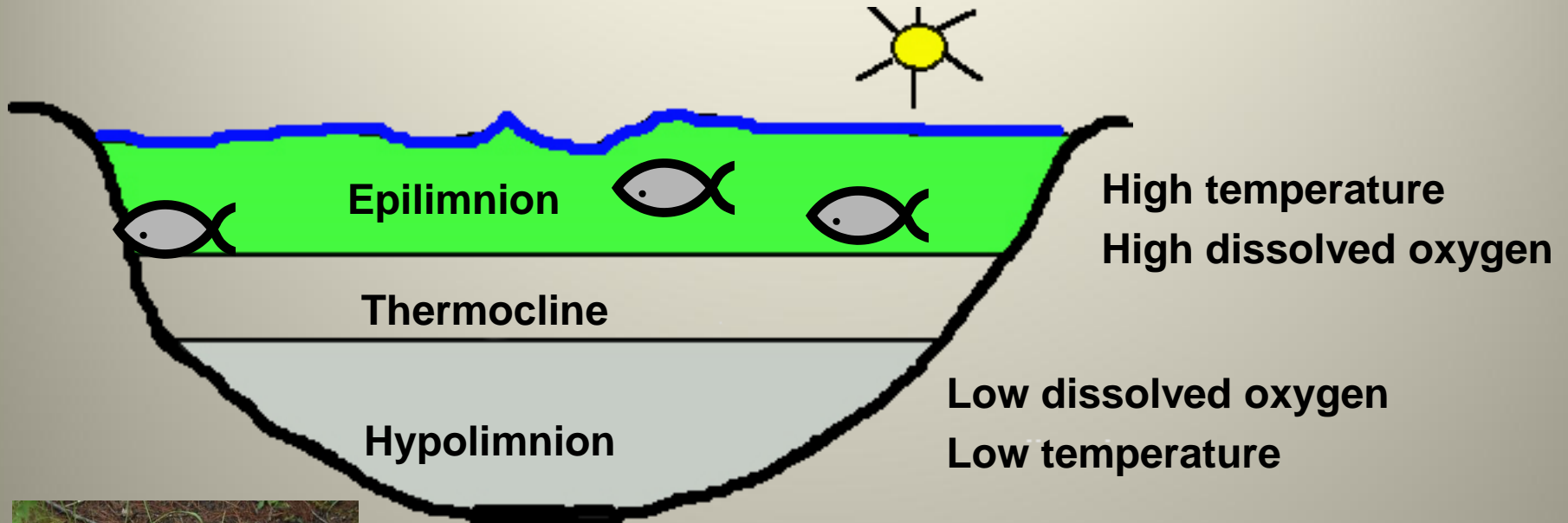


Water Quality Dynamics

- pH (acidity) = soil, atmospheric input
- Alkalinity = total bases (HCO_3^-)
- Hardness = total salts (Ca^{2+} , Mg^{2+})



Summer Water Quality



Fish Species

- Bluegill sunfish
- Redear sunfish
- Largemouth bass
- Channel catfish



Fish Stocking

- Fall- fingerling bluegill
- Spring- fingerling bass
- 20:1 bass:bluegill rate
- Established ponds use larger bluegill (5"+), 250+/acre
- Catfish 50/acre 8"+



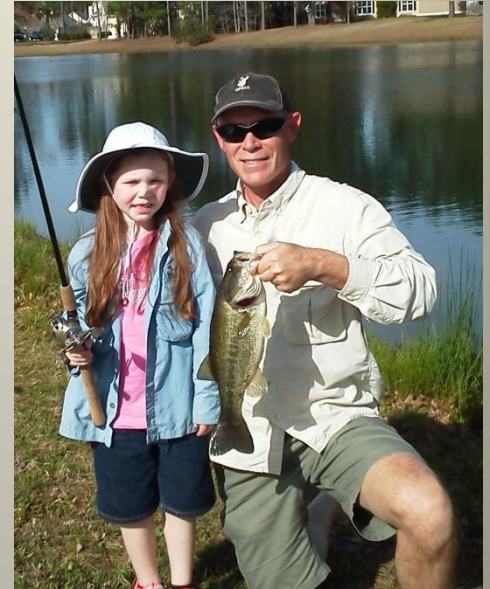
Fish Management

- New- harvest 2nd fall
- Harvest is critical!
- It's ok to take fish!
- 99% of lakes have too many bass
- Surplus produced annually
- Fish harvest promotes sustainability



Harvest Regulations

- Keep it simple
- Use bag limits
- 5 bass/day
- 10 bluegill/day
- Most community ponds best managed as put-and-take fishery
- Supplemental stocking



Summary

- Most stormwater ponds are not suited for quality fisheries-take time to evaluate ROI
- Habitat limited, water quality dynamics
- Largemouth bass and bluegill however will survive for the most part and provide some recreational value
- Evaluate your ponds and budget to get most bang for your buck and be honest with your anglers

Questions?

